

TO THE ELECTORS OF THE COUNTY OF HALIFAX.

FELLOW ELECTORS,—

The time is now rapidly approaching when you will be required to elect members for the Dominion Legislature.

In order that you may be the better prepared to perform this duty, allow me to place a few facts before you.

Though it is perfectly true that a Government can do very little towards making its subjects prosperous, yet it is equally true that their rulers can do much towards preventing the progress of the people in material wealth. When a Government performs efficiently the purpose for which it is constituted, in securing the lives, liberty and property of its subjects, leaving each individual free to pursue the business or occupation best suited to his circumstances, the prosperity of its people will depend upon their own intelligence, industry and frugality. When, however, a Government fails in those all-important particulars, the arm of industry becomes paralyzed. When the rulers are extravagant in their expenditure of the public funds, supporting a host of useless officials, or wasting them in public works of but little utility; or when by ill-advised legislation it tempts or forces the people to embark their capital, or employ their labor in enterprises unsuited to the circumstances of the country or the character of the population, it retards the accumulation of wealth.

Before the Confederation of the Provinces we electors had only to consider the political questions presented to our view in one aspect, as to the influence of the measures advocated upon the destinies of this Province; now, however, we must also trace their effect upon the Dominion.

In think, however, you will agree with me, that we ought in the first place to look to our own interests. We must not follow leaders but measurers. We must not support McKenzie, because he is representative of the Grit Party, nor McDonald, because he is the representative of the Liberal-Conservative Party; but support that party, whatever its name, which will best promote the interests of the Dominion, and which will give us that justice which has so long been denied.

The question which most interests us is the tariff. Shall there be a revision of the tariff or not? That is the question to be determined at the polls. It is not a question of protection, or not. Neither of the opposing parties are free traders. McDonald preaches a protection policy, but McKenzie puts it in practice. The present tariff is not a revenue one, but one highly protective in its operation. While the oil pressed by the forces of nature out of coal pays 50 per cent. duty,

in order that the oil wells of Ontario may pay a large profit to their owners, and the American Coal from which it is produced is allowed to enter duty free, it is waste time to endeavour to make people believe that the policy imposing the duty was not protective. While nearly one third of the goods imported into the Dominion are free, and others pay duties ranging from 5 to 350 per cent., and the tariff by its operation creates manufactures and gives large profits to manufacturers, it cannot be pretended that the tariff has been prepared solely for revenue purposes.

Banishing, therefore, the question of protection for the present, let us calmly consider which of the two parties it will be most for our interest as Nova Scotians to support.

The present Government is mainly upheld by the influence of Ontario, the most powerful, most selfish, and as respects her own interests, the most far sighted Province in the Dominion,

Let us trace the results of her influence on the financial legislation of the Country.

In 1866 we imported into this Province \$14,381,000, on which we paid duties amounting in all to \$1,226,000. The year subsequent to Confederation we only imported \$8,200,000, and paid duties amounting to \$1,132,000. So that previous to that measure we were paying at the rate of \$8.05 per cent., while the year after we had to pay \$13.78 per cent. The year previous to Confederation Ontario and Quebec paid \$13.62 per cent., the year after they only paid at the rate of \$11.83 per cent.

From 1869 to 1873 inclusive, Ontario and Quebec paid at the rate of \$11.91 per cent., while Nova Scotia paid at the rate of \$12.96 per cent. There was then a change of Government. The influence of Ontario is at once felt. The duties in Ontario and Quebec from 1874 to 1877 inclusive, sinks from \$11.91 per cent. to \$11.83 per cent., while those of Nova Scotia rises from \$12.96 per cent. to \$13.69 per cent.

Let us now make a few calculations based upon these figures. Nova Scotia, from 1868 to 1873 inclusive, imported \$55,645,432 worth of goods, and paid duties thereon amounting to \$7,280,426, or at the average rate of \$13.08 per cent, Ontario and Quebec during the same period imported goods valued at \$423,494,284, paying for duty thereon the sum of \$50,462,099, or at the average rate of \$11.91 per cent. Now had Nova Scotia paid at the same rate as those Provinces, she would only have paid as duty the sum of \$6,627,705. If those Provinces had paid at the same rate as Nova Scotia, they would have paid the sum of \$55,497,296. Let us now take the years for which the present Government are responsible, from 1874 to 1877 inclusive, and we will find that Nova Scotia imported goods worth \$39,671,476, and paid for duties \$5,434,541, while Ontario and Quebec, importing \$345,889,565, paid for duties only \$40,931,228. If Nova Scotia had been paying at the same rate as those Provinces, she would only have paid the sum of \$4,694,524. If those Provinces had paid at the same rate as Nova Scotia, they would have paid the sum of \$47,383,024. The Blue Books therefore show that under the McDonald Government in six years we paid out of a total amount of \$7,280,426 the sum of \$652,721 more than the proportion paid by these Provinces; and that under the present Government in four years out of total amount

of \$5,434,541 we have paid the sum of \$740,007 more than the proportion paid by those Provinces. Now had Ontario and Quebec paid at the same rate under the McKenzie Government as they were paying under the McDonald Government, they would have paid \$298,808 more than they have done, while Nova Scotia would have paid \$283,118 less. If they had been paying under the McDonald Government at the same rate as we were paying, they would have paid in 6 years on a total importation of \$423,494,284 the sum of \$4,930,953 more. And if they had paid under the McKenzie Government at the same rate as we have been compelled to pay, they would have paid in four years on a total importation of \$345,889,565 the sum of \$6,448,724 more than they have actually paid.

If we compare the Province of Ontario with the Province of Nova Scotia, the difference is still more striking. The average rate of duty of Nova Scotia from 1869 to 1877 inclusive, is \$13.20 per cent., while the average rate of Ontario is \$10.13 per cent. Had she paid at the same rate as Nova Scotia, she ought in those 9 years have paid \$10,517,200 more than she has really paid.

These calculations, though based upon figures taken from the Blue Books, do not fairly represent the injustice perpetrated by the present tariff upon this Province.

In 1861 the total imports of this Province amounting to \$7,613,227, and in 1866 they had increased to \$14,381,008, having nearly doubled in 5 years. The Blue Books show our imports of 1867-8 to have been only \$8,213,682. No person at all conversant with the trade of this Province, will believe that the imports which had been so rapidly increasing would have fallen off in one year by more than \$6,000,000, or could have dwindled down to \$7,749,333 the next year. Bad as has been the effect of Confederation, it could not have decreased our imports to one-half in two years. We must therefore assume that the imports were implemented by importations from the other Provinces, no record of which is kept in the Statistics of the Dominion. Now, assuming that the imports have not increased, but have remained what they were in 1866, instead of importing \$96,000,000 we have really imported \$145,000,000. If the careful calculations made by Mr. Dwyer, and which were confirmed by Mr. Brydges in a conversation I had with him on the subject of the goods passing over the Intercolonial, be correct, the present imports of this Province cannot be less than \$18,000,000 per annum, instead of less than \$10,000,000, the figures shown by the Blue Books. Surely it is not assuming too much to calculate upon an increase of \$4,000,000 in 11 years, when the imports of Ontario and Quebec in the same period have increased from \$53,802,319 to \$78,217,828, and when the total imports of those Provinces during the last ten years have averaged more than \$76,900,000 per annum.

Lest, however, there should be any objection raised to this species of argument, let us assume that the trade of the Province has not increased during the last ten years, but that with an increase of about 10 per cent. in the number of its inhabitants it still imports only \$14,500,000. Let me further assume that the goods imported from the other Provinces have either paid duty there, or that their price has been enhanced by the tariff, so that the average enhancement is equivalent to that of the goods imported from Foreign Countries. Those con-

versant with the inter-provincial trade will tell you that both these calculations are under the mark. Then we will find that during the last ten years Nova Scotia has paid not \$12,700,000, but really more than \$18,000,000 without excise or stamp duties, adding those she has paid \$20,000,000. Taking, therefore, the present population of Nova Scotia at 400,000, and the present imports at only \$14,000,000, it is equivalent to a payment of \$5.00 by every man, woman and child in the Province, or \$30 by every head of a family. In other words every laboring man is compelled to give one days labor out of every ten to support the government.

The articles used by the poor man, by the present tariff, pays as much and in many cases far more than those used by the wealthy. Silks and satins pay no more than woollens and cottons. The tea used by the wealthy manufacturer of Ontario pays about 10 per cent., while that used by our poor fishermen pays between 30 and 35 per cent. out of every ten pounds of tea the former uses, the Government takes one, while out of every four pounds the latter purchases, the same Government extracts one pound. The cigars smoked by the millionaire at the bank board pay only 30 per cent., while the tobacco smoked by the poor fisherman on the Banks of Newfoundland pays 200 per cent. The wine consumed by the rich merchant pays less than 20 per cent., while the rum drank by the poor laborer of this Province pays more than 350 per cent. For every dollar's worth of wine imported for the wealthy, Government gets 20 cents; while it makes the poor man pay \$3.50 for every dollar's worth of rum imported for him.

Is it surprising that the more lightly taxed manufacturers of Ontario can send down their goods and undersell the highly taxed people of this Province.

Is it astonishing that with a tariff constructed to enable the grocers of Toronto to import from New York, that our West India trade should languish, that our coopers should lack employment, our fishermen customers, and our ships return empty to this port after having deposited their cargoes at that great emporium of the United States.

Is it a matter of wonder that with a tariff pressing so onerously and so unjustly on this Province, the assessed values of the different counties show a large decrease in value during the last ten years. That Cape Breton has decreased from \$2,821,000 in 1869, to \$2,625,000 in 1878; that Digby from \$1,284,000 has sunk to \$1,084,000; that East Hants from \$1,655,000 has gone down to \$1,472,000, and West Hants which in 1870 stood at \$2,423,000 is now assessed at \$2,064,000, and that Queen's county has dwindled down from \$1,812,000 to \$1,245,000.

With these figures before you, taken from the public records, I call upon you to exercise your franchise in favour of the party which will so re-adjust the tariff as to make it fair and equitable in its operations.

The present Government has not listened to our reasonable demands, but has refused to make any amendment. Let us try another, and let us be careful in the selection of our representatives to choose men who will not hesitate to abandon any Government that will not do us justice.

JAMES THOMSON.

Halifax, July 19th, 1878.